



# NOTICE

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## Information About and Prevention of 2019 Novel Coronavirus (Coronavirus)

In recent weeks, you have likely heard some coverage of a new coronavirus called the Wuhan Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV). The M-NCPPC is working closely with the local/state public health agencies and the agency's medical provider to ensure that appropriate and coordinated protocols are in place. This document addresses frequently asked questions on the Coronavirus and provides links to helpful resources. Information follows the most current guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to ensure prompt reporting and proper infection control measures. The CDC is the federal agency responsible for setting national guidelines for response to new and emerging health threats. The M-NCPPC will continue to monitor infection control protocols and update the workforce with relevant information.

**The M-NCPPC's Safety Office is the Point of Contact for Workplace Concerns.** Questions/concerns regarding the handling 2019-nCoV coronavirus within M-NCPPC should be directed to the Safety Office which will coordinate necessary follow-up with State/local health departments. Each situation will be reviewed against established CDC infection control standards to prevent potential transmission. The Safety Office is available 24 hours/7 days a week through the following numbers: **301-395-0563 or 240-495-3018.**

### **What Is the Coronavirus and How Is It Spread?**

According to the CDC, the new coronavirus causes respiratory illness in people and spreads in ways similar to the common cold or flu. This virus was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China. Although there are isolated cases in the United States, the CDC reports this virus is NOT currently spreading in communities in the United States. Right now, the greatest risk of infection is for people in China or people who have traveled to and from China. Risk of infection is dependent on exposure. Close contacts of people who are infected are at greater risk of exposure.

Patients with 2019-nCoV have reportedly had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of:

- fever
- cough
- shortness of breath

In the more severe cases, patients can have complications from pneumonia.

### **What Can I Do as an Employee?**

Being prepared and taking preventative measures are essential to staying protected.

#### **1. Practice Careful Hygiene/Protect Yourself:**

This time of year, individuals are prone to a number of respiratory illnesses. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to a virus. The same everyday precautions apply when dealing with any of these contagious illnesses, including the 2019-nCoV. These include:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash. Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

## **What Can I Do as an Employee? (continued)**

### **2. Prevent the Spread of Respiratory Illnesses to Others:**

- Inform your supervisor if you are sick from any respiratory illness and stay home until symptoms subside. It's important to rest and to prevent exposure to other individuals.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

### **Extra Precautions Against the 2019-nCoV (Coronavirus)**

The CDC recommends that travelers avoid all nonessential travel to China. If travel cannot be avoided, the following link provides current recommendations from the CDC on travel and protection in outbreak regions: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/china>.

The CDC is taking proactive steps to minimize the spread of 2019-nCoV. This includes entry screening of passengers at airports and coordinating with federal/local public health agencies. If you believe you have been exposed to the virus and have not already been screened, you should:

- Contact your medical provider—even if you do not have symptoms. Call the doctor **before** your arrival so the office can take proper precautions for your care and the protection of other individuals.

The doctor will:

- Evaluate your exposure level,
  - Provide advice on monitoring symptoms/testing, and
  - Consult with, and notify, public health agencies.
- Stay isolated from other people and the workplace if you have symptoms.

If your healthcare provider determines a risk, please have the provider contact the M-NCPPC Safety Office at **301-395-0563 or 240-495-3018**.

The following links provide additional guidance on the Coronavirus and its prevention.

- [What You Need to Know About 2019 Novel Coronavirus \(CDC\) \(link is https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/index.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/index.html)
- [2019 Novel Coronavirus \(2019-nCoV\) Outbreak — General Information \(Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene\) \(link is https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/Pages/Novel-coronavirus.aspx\)](https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/Pages/Novel-coronavirus.aspx)
- [2019 Novel Coronavirus \(2019-nCoV\) Situation Summary \(CDC\) \(link is https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/summary.html#situation-in-us\)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/summary.html#situation-in-us)